

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 10, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-230, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
S-220, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

As the Senate continues to work on the next legislative package to address COVID-19, I write to urge you to include funding and flexibility for states to help state-recognized Indian tribes respond to the pandemic. State-recognized Indian tribes have largely been excluded from receiving assistance in previous COVID-19 response legislation despite experiencing similar needs as other communities. Funding and flexibility should be given to states to provide state-recognized Indian tribes with the support they need and ensure that no indigenous communities are left behind.

Across the country there are more than 65 state-recognized Indian tribes, including three in New Jersey. Many of these state-recognized tribal communities, who are struggling to meet the increased demand for health and social safety-net COVID-19 resources, are in dire need of assistance. State governments and other organizations are attempting to provide resources but, due to the overwhelming strain on these assistance programs, are not able to meet the full needs of these tribes. This crisis has exacerbated inequities in every corner of our nation, and it is critical that no community be left with fewer resources to combat the crippling healthcare and financial effects of the pandemic.

For these reasons, I am asking that Congress include funding and flexibility for states in the next COVID-19 legislative package to allocate to state-recognized tribes which may be utilized to respond to the pandemic, including through outreach, direct financial assistance for families and businesses, acquiring critically-needed personal protective equipment and medical supplies, and housing and nutrition assistance. As Congress continues to work to meet the needs of all Americans, it is imperative that we close these gaps in aid, and ensure that all communities are receiving equitable support.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We look forward to continuing to work with you as we continue to respond to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker  
United States Senator